APPENDIX G.

CLOSING REMARKS OF THE DEWAN AT THE BIRTHDAY SESSION OF THE REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY, 13TH JUNE 1922.

GENTLEMEN,

The second session of the Representative Assembly this year has had to be continued beyond the usual timelimit owing to the very important financial questions that were placed before it and the larger number of subjects that were brought up for discussion in excess of the fixed number of one hundred allotted for the occasion, over a hundred having been left over as balance from the Dasara Session. I am sorry that even within this extended time it has not been possible to dispose of all the subjects that have been brought up. This is some evidence of the necessity for a change in our procedure. But many of them have been brought up previously, thereby indicating standing grievances, or need for revision of existing methods of administration in certain departments. I have promised to this Assembly detailed enquiry into these matters, and hope to give more definite information as to the action proposed or taken, at the next session.

The discussions on the Budget lasted for two and a half days and practically covered every department of administration, and I am now to express to the Assembly the thanks of Government for the various suggestions that have been made on the subject of our financial policy. I am glad that the rough scheme outlined in my opening speech has been well received by you and that there is a general concurrence of approval so far as the retrenchment proposals of the Finance Committee are concerned. Government have dealt with many of their resolutions already and will complete the consideration of their proposals at a very early date. It is only natural that there should be differences of opinion in regard to details. But Government are now in possession of the views this Assembly holds on the subject of retrenchments, and I can assure you that these views will receive their most careful consideration. Government are pleased to note that the Budget as presented to this Assembly has not come in for any very severe criticism, although disappointment has been expressed owing to reduced allotments under the various heads of expenditure. The several requests that have been made in the course of the discussions for increased grants have been carefully noted, and the only possible reply that Government can give now is that, while sympathising with the needs and requirements of the administration which have been so elaborately and eloquently brought to notice in the course of the discussion, Government are unfortunately unable all at once to provide for them in the course of the next year owing to the present financial position. The grants have been, no doubt, reduced almost to the margin of bare efficiency but I have every hope that with the prospects of improvement which I have held out in my opening speech, we shall gradually be able to carry on the policy of development and expansion as far as funds permit.

After hearing all the representations on the subject, Government, however, have now come to the decision that the grant of an additional sum of at least Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 75,000 should be made to meet the most urgent cases in regard to which inadequacy of allotment has been established. I hope it will give this Assembly satisfaction to note that according to this decision, we have decided to make a provision for drinking water wells for those districts which have no allotment for the purpose. It is not possible just now to increase the recurring expenditure on Education; but if it is possible to tap local resources, the grants may be increased during the year to that extent for Primary Education. If Town and Minor Municipalities work out any schemes of improvement and submit them for the sanction of Government during the year they will be glad to assist those municipalities with funds.

Special requests have been made in respect of tank irrigation works for which the raiyats have made large contributions and which are in an incomplete stage and also for starting the Hemavati and T.-Narsipur bridges. The Chief Engineer

will be instructed to push on all such works and, by a re-distribution of the grants shown in Appendix C of the Budget, make larger provision for them. An additional sum will be provided in the Public Works Department budget to meet urgent cases. I shall carefully consider the questions of the Hemavati Bridge and the T.- Narasipur Bridge and if it is possible to look ahead and commit Government during the next two or three years to their portion of the contribution, necessary orders will be issued to start the works, meeting the expenditure next year from the sums contributed by the District Boards. A margin will also be left for meeting the other minor requests of the members of the Assembly, such as building grants for Anglo-Hindustani Schools, additional grants for Ayurvedic institutions, additional provision for new dispensaries, etc., which will receive due consideration when the Budget is finally passed.

I do not consider it necessary to refer in detail to the several subjects that have been brought up for discussion, specially as I and my colleagues have attempted to give replies to the representations connected therewith at the time they were so brought up. I may however add that we hope to take up the question of the administration of Muzrai funds with a view to devise methods by which the investments and administration of these funds may be improved for the better advantage of the institutions concerned.

I have also announced at the Economic Conference that Government have decided to appoint a special officer to work out schemes for the amelioration of the Panchamas, and all the suggestions made by the representative of that community before this Assembly will receive most careful consideration.

The six special subjects that Government placed before this Assembly for its consideration have evoked considerable discussion, and I am glad that the Assembly decided upon the appointment of a select committee to go into the procedure and the rules of discussion in the Representative Assembly. I earnstly hope that the report of this committee will help Government in passing final orders which will give general satisfaction, and which may be brought into force at the next Dasara. The suggestions made regarding the privilege of recognised associations to send up subjects will receive due consideration.

I have already announced that in regard to the question of reimposition of fees in Middle Schools and enhancement of fees in High Schools as well as the question of the improvement of Land Revenue pending re-settlement, Government do not wish to carry out the suggestions that have been made in the notes circulated to the members, in view of the general disapproval expressed by the Assembly.

Government will proceed immediately to revise the rules to carry out the recommendations of the Legislative Council and this Assembly relating to the property qualifications prescribed for voters. The necessary draft Bill will be framed for the levy of Court Fees in Village Courts which has been approved by this Assembly; and as announced by me, a draft Irrigation Bill, the general principles of which have been approved by you, will be published in Gazette at a very early date on the lines indicated in the note to enable the public to make suggestions and offer criticisms. I am glad to note that the Assembly appreciate the policy introduced this year, of consulting them on important legislative measures.

In conclusion, Gentlemen, I thank you for the very able, painstaking, cheerful and good-humoured manner in which you have carried on your discussions ; and I wish also to thank you for the willing co-operation which you have afforded me in conducting the proceedings. I do not wish to detain you any longer. This has been a strenuous session, and I shall be happy to feel that it has helped to produce a determination amongst both officials as well as non-officials of all classes to help Government and co-operate with them in the arduous and difficult task that lies before them.

Gentlemen, the session is over.